



Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee AIRS – NGO MOU Request Policy

***Prepared by the Public Safety
Interoperable Communications Office
October 19, 2010***



Background

- AIRS radio frequencies are used in the event of multi-agency, multi-discipline, and/or multi-jurisdictional operations requiring the use of the common radio channel(s), specifically for the purpose of coordinating activities during identified incidents.
- Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) has requested recommendations from the SIEC on a policy for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) requesting access to Arizona Interagency Radio System (AIRS).
- This was discussed at the last SIEC meeting and assigned to the PSIC office for review and formulation.
- The PSIC office also met with DPS on Sep 30th to review the required intent of the policy recommendations
- The AIRS NGO MOU policy recommendations are presented today for Approval.

1) Ability to extend coverage of an MOU with a government authority to cover NGOs secondarily could be considered.

- *We researched this and found that since the MOU is primarily an FCC licensing instrument it requires the direct agreement between DPS (the licensee) and the signing agency.*

2) Inclusion of public safety or service NGOs within existing State plans could be reviewed for guidance.

- *We reviewed the State Emergency Response and Recovery Plan (SERRP) to see if it would enable a concise way to identify some eligible NGOs.*
 - *There are some NGOs designated as primary agencies under the SERRP so that designation may be helpful.*
 - *American Red Cross (ARC)*
 - *Arizona Humane Society (AZHS)*
 - *Arizona Public Service (APS)*
 - *Arizona State Citizen Corps Council (AZCCC)*
 - *Arizona Veterinary Medical Association (AZVMA)*
 - *Arizona Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (AzVOAD)*
 - *Make A Difference (MAD)*
 - *Volunteer Center of Southern Arizona (VCSOAZ)*

2) SERRP review continued...

- *We found that the inclusion of secondary support agencies identified in the SERRP would have included too many agencies (see Addendum).*
 - *Examples include Arizona Pork Council, Arizona State Bar Association and Arizona Medical Association among 50 other agencies.*

3) The utility of establishing a SIEC review committee could be considered (similar to the NIMS Communications Unit (NIMS-CU) Workgroup).

- *We think such a committee has a role in reviewing requests when DPS requests that review.*

4) Governmental emergency management agencies responsible for implementing emergency plans could be required to sponsor or endorse NGOs as essential to their emergency response plans and therefore appropriate AIRS users.

- *The sponsorship approach is the most viable. It enables local jurisdictions to identify selected NGOs to communicate with during emergency response based on local need and fosters the establishment of an agreement between the primary public safety agency managing the AIRS frequencies (DPS) and the NGO in advance.*

An NGO who meets the following 2 criteria may petition DPS to enter into an MOU in regard to AIRS:

1. The NGO has the express written support of a recognized government agency that is responsible for emergency management plans for its jurisdiction.
 - An MOU signed by any NGO must contain the endorsement of the supporting agency. If a supporting agency withdraws its support in writing to DPS, DPS will cancel the AIRS MOU with the NGO.
 - The jurisdiction supporting the NGO must match the area for which the NGO is requesting AIRS usage.
2. The NGO serves a critical public safety role as determined by DPS in that jurisdiction including the need for direct public safety incident communications.
 - DPS may request concurrence from the SIEC in the event that the criticality of the NGOs public safety role warrants review.

- ***Can a committee be formed to review these requests when DPS requests concurrence?***
- ***Could an alternative test be an automatic inclusion of agencies listed as primary in the SERRP? Would they also have to exhibit an obvious need for direct public safety incident communications?***



Agencies with Current MOUs

The following NGOs agencies currently have signed MOUs with DPS. If the recommended policy is adopted, these entities would require a supporting agency sign-off within a reasonable period of time (perhaps 60 days):

- Catholic Healthcare West - East Valley
- Arrowhead Mobile Healthcare, Inc.
- John C. Lincoln Deer Valley Hospital
- Summit Healthcare
- Yuma Regional Medical Center
- AZ Public Service Company (APS)
- Tucson Electric Power Co - Springerville
- Tucson Airport Authority
- Arizona Wing, Civil Air Patrol
- Phoenix Children's Hospital



Discussion; Possible Approval

NGO 2 part criteria –

1. The NGO has the express written support of a recognized government agency that is responsible for emergency management plans for its jurisdiction.
 2. The NGO serves a critical public safety role as determined by DPS in that jurisdiction including the need for direct public safety incident communications.
- SIEC review committee for MOU requests as needed.
 - Inclusion of SERRP primary NGO agencies without the need for a supporting endorsement.